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STATE FOR EUR/CARC AND EUR DAS MATT BRYZA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/04/2017

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [GG](#)

SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER NOGHAIDELI ON OKRUASHVILI AFFAIR

Classified By: Ambassador John F. Tefft, reason 1.4(b) and (d).

¶1. (C) In an October 4 meeting with the Ambassador, Prime Minister Noghaidei admitted that the sequence of former Defense Minister Irakli Okruashvili's allegations against President Saakashvili and his subsequent arrest made the government look bad. He said it was a mistake for the government not to arrest Okruashvili earlier. However, it was concerned for the "smooth operation" of the important Ministry of Defense. As a result, the arrest was delayed. He accused Okruashvili of making personnel changes in the military during his term in office that were not well understood or accepted. He thinks the Ministry is back on the right track now.

¶2. (C) Noghaidei said that it would not be a bad thing if the political opposition to the National Movement can unite, but he does not think it can. In response to the storm of criticism over the arrest of Okruashvili, he thinks the government should "double its speed" on reform of the judicial system, move forward with electoral reforms and provide a clear public explanation of the charges against Okruashvili.

TEFFT